

ABSTRACT

Professional PSIT has been present in Belgium as early as in the 1970s but has really taken off from 1992. It follows a constantly increasing number of requests and a demand for improved quality.

As a result, professionalization of Public Service Translators and Interpreters in Belgium has become a key issue from the early 2000s onwards.

Apart from that, specific needs rapidly emerged and Brussels Public Service Translation and Interpreting (SeTIS Bruxelles) designed an offer which was adapted to the evolving practices and is reflected by adaptation to legislation changes.

For SeTIS Bruxelles, the realities and needs expressed in the field require a greater validation of the interpreters' cultural and personal backgrounds

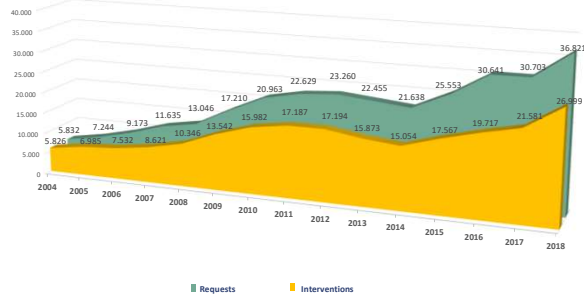
BACKGROUND

Brussels-Capital region is a linguistically-diverse area with 1.2 million inhabitants. 35% are foreigners, and a further 27% are foreign-born. So nearly two thirds of Brussels residents come from linguistically different backgrounds. In recent years, demographic evolution in the region has been directly connected to immigration (see table 1 as an example)

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Overall
National Migration	-12.818	-12.946	-13.714	-12.583	-13.420	-13.336	-14.743	-14.301	-107.861
International Migration	29.406	23.615	19.498	11.975	16.106	17.309	9.917	12.580	140.406
Total Net migration	16.588	10.669	5.784	-608	2.686	3.973	-4.826	-1.721	32.545

Table 1: Evolution of National and international migration in Brussels-Capital Region, 2010-2017 (source: IBSA & Statbel)

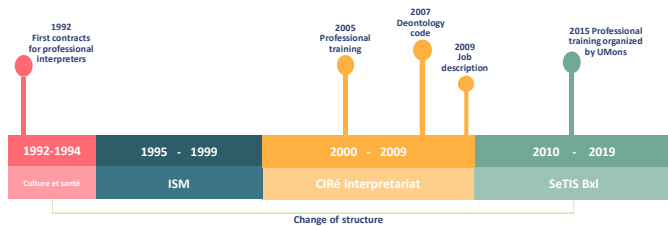
The need for professional interpretations has also increased in recent years. At SeTIS Bruxelles, the requests for translation and interpretation services have increased six times over the past 15 years (see graph. 1). In that time the organization has been struggling to cope with the almost constant increase.



Graph 1: Evolution of translation and interpretation requests and interventions at SeTIS Bruxelles, - 2004-2018 (source: SeTIS Bruxelles)

Along the years, SeTIS Bruxelles (formerly CIRE-Interprétariat, from 2000 to 2010) has also been involved in the development of a clear job description, a professional training scheme and a deontology code through a national PSIT services platform called COFETIS-FOSOVET.

TIMELINE ON EVOLUTIONS



These improvements focused on "the communicative and technical" approach of PSIT. However, the field workers' practices evolved as well (e.g. The collaborative tandem of therapist-interpreters in mental health settings), and the experience of professional interpreters became more varied.

PRACTICAL INNOVATION

To try and give an adequate answer to these specific needs, our institution, SeTIS Bruxelles, has designed specific interpreting services focusing on the use of the interpreters' intercultural competencies. In recent years, particular attention was dedicated to the following two settings:

Action 1: Relying on the interpreters' intercultural skills

Since 2013, SeTIS Bruxelles' interpreters have been working on a daily basis at CPAS de Schaerbeek (OCMW Schaerbeek in Dutch), which is Brussels' second-largest social aid service.

The permanent presence of several interpreters achieved through a shift work system has contributed to solving multiple communication issues. However, many intercultural misunderstandings still happened and led to frustration for each part of the triad. Since 2018, the two institutions have decided to work on this issue, along with the improvement of triadic relations in their daily practice.

Action 2: Training interpreters' as citizenship instructors

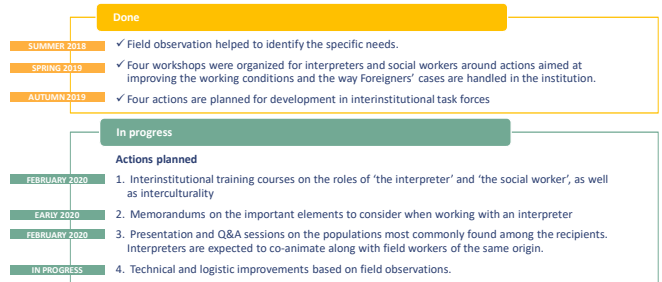
All the interpreters at SeTIS Bruxelles come from a migrant background. In 2015, Brussels-Capital Regional implemented Welcome Offices for Integration (called "BAPA" in French, eventually created in 2016).

Anticipating the needs of instructors, SeTIS Bruxelles has decided to rely on our interpreters' intercultural knowledge and experience with the migration process. A training programme was organised in 2015-2016 for all 45 interpreters working for SeTIS Bruxelles and gave the interpreters access to an equivalence process in order to be recognized as citizenship instructors.

RESULTS

Action 1: Relying on the interpreters' intercultural skills

Both institutions are currently working together to take into account the specific communication needs of fieldworkers and service users.



Action 2: Interpreters' as citizenship instructors

In the past three years, sixteen interpreters of SeTIS Bruxelles have fully qualified as instructors in citizenship education for newcomers. The programme was launched in August 2018. So far, 18 modules have been held by six interpreters-instructors. They now work with the two main offices and are expected to start with the third office (opened in Sept. 2019).

On January 1st, 2020, the integration program will become compulsory for Third Country Nationals. The need for qualified multilingual instructors are expected to increase. SeTIS Bruxelles is able to provide services in 17 languages and dialects.

DISCUSSION

Implementing new measures always implies questioning existing practices. The choice of SeTIS Bruxelles to involve the interpreters in the discussion is part of the process and its validation by field professionals.

However, it is also important to keep in mind that the interpreters are protected by a deontology code that has been approved and has helped to defining the role for more than 10 years.

The new missions that fieldworkers are currently defining carry new challenges, which are both morally and technically difficult to grasp beforehand.

SeTIS Bruxelles management has thus decided to focus on the development of these new activities, along with quality, diversity, well-being and psychosocial risk-prevention policies.

REFERENCES FOR FURTHER READING

- Bruwier, N. ; Delizée, A. ; Michaux, C. et de Brouwer, S., 2019. "Évolution du Service de Traduction et Interprétariat en milieu Social Bruxellois (SeTIS Bruxelles) : de la reconnaissance à la valorisation des compétences chez l'interprète", *FITISPos-II*, vol. 6, 28-45.
- Delizée, A. 2015. *Émergence et professionnalisation de l'interprétation communautaire en Belgique francophone*. humanOrg, Institut de recherche en développement humain et des organisations. Mons : Université de Mons.